

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 130435Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4557

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 3912

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: SGDS/3

TAGS: SREF, US, CB, TH

SUBJECT: REFUGEES FROM CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM

REF: STATE 84084.

1. AT PRESENT, THERE IS ONLY ONE SMALL GROUP OF VIETNAMESE ORPHAN REFUGEES IN HONG KONG IN TRANSIT TO CANADA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT LOCAL CATHOLIC RELIEF ORGANIZATION IS PLANNING, AND HAS HONG KONG IMMIGRATION PERMISSION, TO BRING IN 50 TO 60 MIXED-BLOOD ORPHANS. MOST OF THESE ARE ALREADY TARGETTED FOR ADOPTION BY LOCAL (MOSTLY WESTERN) RESIDENTS. HOWEVER, WE NOTE PRESS REPORTS THAT THE VATICAN HAS DISCOURAGED CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FROM INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH EFFORTS.

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2. LARGER PROBLEM IN HONG KONG IS PRESENCE OF LARGE

NUMBER (ESTIMATED AS HIGH AS 50,000) VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIANS. THESE PERSONS, ALMOST ALL ETHNIC CHINESE, HAVE ENTERED HONG KONG BOTH LEGALLY AND ILLEGALLY IN PAST YEARS AND IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE MORE RECENT ARRIVALS WOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO BENEFIT FROM THE NEW PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION. HONG KONG IMMIGRATION IS UNABLE TO PROVIDE US WITH ANY DEFINITE STATISTICS ON THESE PEOPLE BUT IMMIGRATION DIRECTOR BELIEVES MAJORITY MAY ALREADY HAVE RESETTLED IN HONG KONG AND HAVE OBTAINED HONG KONG IDENTITY CARDS. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND USE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S PAROLE AUTHORIZATION FOR SUCH PERSONS, HOWEVER, MIGHT WELL CAUSE A FLOOD OF REQUESTS HERE.

3. BASICALLY, WE ARE UNABLE TO PROVIDE ANY TYPE OF ESTIMATE OF POSSIBLE COSTS FOR ASSISTANCE EITHER TO THOSE ALREADY IN HONG KONG OR NEW REFUGEES LIKELY TO FIND THEIR WAY TO HONG KONG IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE BELIEVE OTHER POSTS WILL HAVE EQUALLY DIFFICULT TASK IN MAKING SUCH ESTIMATES. WE THEREFORE URGE THAT AVAILABLE FUNDS BE MAINTAINED IN A CENTRAL, OR POSSIBLY REGIONAL, FUND FROM WHICH POSTS, AS EXTENT OF REFUGEE PROBLEM IN EACH LOCALITY BECOMES CLARIFIED, COULD REQUEST ON AN IMMEDIATE BASIS. AT THE MOMENT, WE HAVE NO NEED OF FUNDS BUT THE ARRIVAL OF ONE SHIP OR PLANE COULD DRASTICALLY CHANGE THIS SITUATION AND WE WOULD URGE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOME TYPE OF 24-HOUR, SEVEN DAY PER WEEK CENTER WITH FUNDING AUTHORITY TO MEET SUCH EMERGENCIES.
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